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Report of the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services

Note by the Secretariat

The present note contains the report of the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, held in Busan, the Republic of Korea, from 7 to 11 June 2010 (UNEP/IPBES/3/3). The report was transmitted by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on 15 July 2010, on behalf of the Governing Council of the Programme, to the General Assembly for consideration at its sixty-fifth session during the high-level segment on biological diversity on 22 September 2010 and thereafter.

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Report of the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services

I. Opening of the meeting

A. Opening ceremony

1. The meeting was held at the Exhibition and Convention Centre in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 7 to 11 June 2010. It began at 10.15 a.m. on Monday, 7 June 2010, with an opening ceremony facilitated by Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Director of the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

B. Opening statements

2. Opening statements were delivered by Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP; Mr. Lee Maanee, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea; and Mr. Hur Nam-sik, Mayor of Busan.

3. In his statement, the Executive Director expressed thanks to the Government of the Republic of Korea for both hosting the current meeting and taking a global lead in the development of a green economy, noting that the summit of the Group of Twenty to be held in Seoul in November 2010 would enable the country to showcase its economic transition programme. Reviewing the work undertaken by UNEP in the biodiversity field, he noted that the third report in the Global Biodiversity Outlook series, launched in May 2010, had made it clear that inaction could only lead to more tipping points in biodiversity and ecosystem loss. In that regard, he stressed that an enhanced science-policy interface had a central role to play in efforts to tackle biodiversity-related issues, but only if it were focused on action and not words. Drawing a parallel with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, he acknowledged that, while human understanding of science might never be complete, collective action was patently required to halt biodiversity loss. He called for the development of a science-policy interface that would help to build capacity in the developing world and that did not neglect existing capacities and institutions.

4. Mr. Lee, in his statement, said that many people remained unaware of the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services, as was reflected by the growing losses being experienced. Drawing attention to the disappearance of forests and other ecosystem services over the past 50 years, he said that the 2010 biodiversity target might have been met had crucial messages on its importance and on necessary actions been conveyed to policymakers. He called for the creation of a body that could speak authoritatively on matters of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the same way as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change did in its field. Summarizing recent key activities on biodiversity and ecosystems, he stressed his Government's commitment to widening those efforts and urged representatives to bring to fruition the work undertaken at the two previous meetings on the current subject and to leave a lasting legacy in 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity.

5. In his statement, Mr. Hur welcomed representatives to Busan and called for international cooperation in efforts to halt biodiversity loss, drawing attention to the interdependence of species and the need to position biodiversity conservation alongside climate change as a key topical issue.

C. Attendance

6. Representatives of the following countries attended the meeting: Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Peru, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

7. An observer for Palestine also participated.

8. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and secretariats of conventions were also present: African Union Commission, Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, European Commission, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Global Biodiversity Information Facility, Global Environment Facility, Global Network for Forest Science Cooperation, International Council for Science, International Union for Conservation of Nature, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations University, United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies, World Bank.

9. Representatives of the following governmental, non-governmental, private-sector and business organizations attended the meeting: Arab Network for Environment and Development, Association of Southeast Asian Nations Centre for Biodiversity, Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, Caribbean Antilles Indigenous Peoples Caucus and the Diaspora, Centre for Conservation Biology, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research Challenge Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Conservation International, Diversitas, European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy, Federation of Environmental and Ecological Diversity for Agricultural Revampment and Human Rights, Future Forest, Global International, Gulf Research Centre, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences, Korea Business Council for

Sustainable Development, MOndes et DYnamiques des Sociétés — Centre national de la recherche scientifique (MODYS-CNRS), Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa, World Resources Institute.

II. Organizational matters

10. As the meeting was convened in accordance with decision SS.XI/4 of the Governing Council, the rules of procedure of the Governing Council applied, mutatis mutandis, to its proceedings.

A. Election of officers

11. The following officers were elected to the bureau of the meeting, each representing one of the five United Nations regions:

Chair:	Mr. Kim Chan-woo (Republic of Korea), Asian and Pacific group
Vice-chairs:	Mr. Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana), African group Mr. Dusan Ognjanovic (Serbia), Central and Eastern European group Mr. Spencer Thomas (Grenada), Latin American and Caribbean group Mr. Robert Watson (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Western European and others group

12. It was agreed that the vice-chairs would share the functions of rapporteur for the meeting.

B. Adoption of the agenda

13. The meeting adopted the following agenda, based on the provisional agenda contained in document UNEP/IPBES/3/1:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
   (a) Election of officers;
   (b) Adoption of the agenda;
   (c) Organization of work.
3. Consideration of whether to establish an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
4. Adoption of recommendations.
5. Adoption of the report.
6. Closure of the meeting.

C. Organization of work

14. Representatives agreed that the meeting would endeavour to conduct all its work in plenary session and, where meeting times were concerned, to follow standard practice for United Nations meetings.

III. Consideration of whether to establish an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services

15. In considering the item, representatives had before them a note by the secretariat on options for improving the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services (UNEP/IPBES/3/2 and Corr.1), which was introduced by the representative of the secretariat.

16. Representatives took up the various considerations under the item. Their deliberations are reflected in the form of an outcome document, entitled "Busan outcome", which may be found in the annex to the present report.

IV. Adoption of recommendations

17. The representatives of Governments present at the meeting adopted recommendations in the form of the above-mentioned outcome document. At the time of the adoption of the recommendations, one representative, endorsed by another, voiced concerns about the text being adopted. The first reserved his right to comment on the issue in other appropriate forums; the second suggested that a more in-depth analysis should be undertaken before the establishment of any platform.

18. Also at the time of the adoption of the recommendations, the representative of Norway said that her country stood ready to host a secretariat on capacity-building in Trondheim to service the platform and its work. The representative of Kenya also expressed his country's interest in hosting the platform, pointing out that Kenya's offer enjoyed the support of other African States. Previously, several representatives had expressed the view that the new platform should be located in a developing or megadiverse country. The representatives of Brazil, India and Kenya had offered to host the secretariat, and the representative of Spain, speaking on behalf of the European Union, had said that some member States would also like to do so.

V. Adoption of the report

19. The present report was adopted on the afternoon of Friday, 11 June 2010, on the basis of the draft report that had been circulated and on the understanding that the secretariat and the rapporteurs would be entrusted with its finalization.

VI. Closure of the meeting

20. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 10.50 p.m. on Friday, 11 June 2010.

Annex

Busan outcome

The representatives of Governments at the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, convened in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 7 to 11 June 2010:

1. Recall decision SS.XI/4 of 26 February 2010, by which the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to convene, in June 2010, a third and final ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting to negotiate and reach agreement on whether to establish an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and to transmit, on behalf of the Governing Council, the outcomes of and necessary documentation from the third and final meeting to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session for consideration during the high-level segment on biological diversity in September 2010 and thereafter;

2. Note the outcomes of the first and second ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meetings on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 10 to 12 November 2008, and in Nairobi from 5 to 9 October 2009, respectively;

3. Acknowledge the importance of terrestrial, marine and coastal, and inland water biodiversity and ecosystem services which, while critically important for sustainable development and current and future human well-being, particularly with regard to poverty eradication, are currently experiencing significant loss; also acknowledge that the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services must be strengthened at all levels; and further acknowledge the importance of ensuring that the science made available is of the highest quality and independence, of enhancing cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies and of building capacity to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services;

4. Welcome the expressions of interest in supporting the proposed platform by the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and encourage further consideration of their roles by their respective governing bodies;

5. Note the interest of the United Nations Development Programme in the proposed platform and the important role of that organization in capacity-building within the United Nations system;

6. Conclude, having now reached agreement, as requested by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme through its decision SS.XI/4, that an intergovernmental science-policy platform for biodiversity and ecosystem services should be established to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development, as follows:

(a) Focusing on government needs and based on priorities established by the plenary, the platform should respond to requests from Governments, including those

conveyed to it by multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The plenary should welcome inputs and suggestions from, and the participation of, United Nations bodies related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The plenary should also encourage and take into account, as appropriate, inputs and suggestions made by relevant stakeholders, such as other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations, environment trust funds, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. To facilitate this, and to ensure that the platform's work programme is focused and efficient, a process to receive and prioritize requests should be established by the plenary;

(b) The new platform should identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers at appropriate scales and catalyse efforts to generate new knowledge by engaging in dialogue with key scientific organizations, policymakers and funding organizations, but should not directly undertake new research;

(c) The new platform should perform regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages, which should include comprehensive global, regional and, as necessary, subregional assessments and thematic issues at appropriate scales and new topics identified by science and as decided upon by the plenary. These assessments must be scientifically credible, independent and peer-reviewed, and must identify uncertainties. There should be a clear and transparent process for sharing and incorporating relevant data. The new platform should maintain a catalogue of relevant assessments, identify the need for regional and subregional assessments and help to catalyse support for subregional and national assessments, as appropriate;

(d) The new platform should support policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies, such as those arising from assessments, to enable decision makers to gain access to those tools and methodologies, and, where necessary, to promote and catalyse their further development;

(e) The new platform should prioritize key capacity-building needs to improve the science-policy interface at appropriate levels and then provide and call for financial and other support for the highest-priority needs related directly to its activities, as decided by the plenary, and catalyse financing for such capacity-building activities by providing a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding;

(f) The new platform should be established as an independent intergovernmental body administered by one or more existing United Nations organizations, agencies, funds or programmes;

(g) The plenary, which should be the platform's decision-making body, should be open to participation by all States Members of the United Nations and by regional economic integration organizations. Intergovernmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders should participate in the plenary as observers, in accordance with the rules of procedure established by the plenary. Through its rules of procedure, the plenary should in general take decisions by consensus of government representatives;

(h) One chair and four vice-chairs, taking due account of the principle of geographical balance among the five United Nations regions, should be nominated and selected by Governments which are members of the plenary. The criteria, nomination process and length of service should be decided by the plenary;

(i) A core trust fund to be allocated by the plenary should be established to receive voluntary contributions from Governments, United Nations bodies, the Global Environment Facility, other intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders, such as the private sector and foundations;

7. Also conclude that in carrying out its work the platform should:

(a) Collaborate with existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including multilateral environmental agreements, United Nations bodies and networks of scientists and knowledge holders, to fill gaps and build upon their work, while avoiding duplication;

(b) Be scientifically independent and ensure credibility, relevance and legitimacy through the peer review of its work and transparency in its decision-making processes;

(c) Use clear, transparent and scientifically credible processes for the exchange, sharing and use of data, information and technologies from all relevant sources, including non-peer-reviewed literature, as appropriate;

(d) Recognize and respect the contribution of indigenous and local knowledge to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems;

(e) Provide policy-relevant information, but not policy-prescriptive advice, mindful of the respective mandates of the multilateral environmental agreements;

(f) Integrate capacity-building into all relevant aspects of its work according to priorities decided by the plenary;

(g) Recognize the unique biodiversity and scientific knowledge thereof within and among regions, and also recognize the need for the full and effective participation of developing countries and for balanced regional representation and participation in its structure and work;

(h) Take an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach that incorporates all relevant disciplines, including social and natural sciences;

(i) Recognize the need for gender equity in all relevant aspects of its work;

(j) Address terrestrial, marine and inland water biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interactions;

(k) Ensure the full use of national, subregional and regional assessments and knowledge, as appropriate;

8. Further conclude that the platform's efficiency and effectiveness should be independently reviewed and evaluated on a periodic basis as decided by the plenary, with adjustments to be made as necessary;

9. Recommend that the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session should be invited to consider the conclusions set out in the present outcome document and take appropriate action to establish the platform;

10. Also recommend that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme should invite the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme, to continue to facilitate any ensuing process to implement the platform until such time as a secretariat is established.